Scrutator *to* Reſponſor;

OR,

An Introduction to a farther Proof,

(If Need be,)

That JESUS CHRIST, the bleſſed Son of GOD, laid down his Life for the Sins of all Mankind.

In Two Letters to RESPONSOR.

With a ſhort Letter to CONSIDERATOR.

If any Man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God.
1 Peter iv. 11.

LEEDS:

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[PRICE TWO-PENCE.]

Scrutator *to* Reſponſor.

LETTER I.

To Mr. RESPONSOR.

Dear SIR,

WHEN your's came abroad, I was on a journey; ſo that I had not the pleaſure of ſeeing it, till it had been a week in the hands of your other readers; and even then, other important buſineſs, which required immediate diſpatch, laid upon my hands. I could not, therefore, make my acknowledgements ſo early as I wiſhed. I have ſince peruſed your favour. The reſult of that peruſal, I beg your acceptance of, in the following Remarks.

It has long been my anxious wiſh, that if I ſhould ever be called to walk the thorny path of Controverſy, I might be favoured with a companion of good ſenſe and chriſtian candor; and, as I am now ſtepped into that path, in conſequence of the three ſcandalous Pamphlets of Philalethes, Calviniſticus, and the author of Polyphemus, I truſt you will not ſuſpect me of flattery, Sir, if I ſay, I hope, I am indulged with the rare bleſſing, I ſo ardently wiſhed for. If you and I, Sir, are but enabled to exemplify that too-much-neglected rule, "ſpeaking the truth in love," I am perſuaded that both we and others ſhall receive advantage from this friendly debate, even though we ſhould not, after all, have the pleaſure of "ſeeing eye to eye." That bleſſed day is coming, when the perfect light ſhall ſhine, and clouds and miſts ſhall be diſpelled for ever. There I hope, thro' infinite mercy, to embrace my good friend, in the arms of that pure, cordial affection, which, alas! our preſent de-

praved ſtate is—I had almoſt ſaid, totally unacquainted with.

I firmly believe, with an excellent Divine of the preſent century *, that "all the hereſies which have corrupted and afflicted the church, owe their original to men's departing from the ſimplicity of Scripture, and muſt derive their cure from a return to it." May you and I, Sir, be happily inſtrumental, in the hand of our bleſſed Saviour, to promote this return!

When I firſt propoſed the Query, Auguſt 15, 1780, I did not doubt but ſomething could be ſaid on your ſide of the queſtion; and ſomething which, by the management of an ingenious pen, like yours, might appear plauſible too. This is the caſe on all ſubjects; otherwiſe no errors could be propagated. Men would never think to aſſert that which they have nothing to ſay in defence of. But without a "thus ſaith the Lord," our aſſertions and inferences will ſignify very little to one who abides by the "ſimplicity of Scripture." I muſt ſtill ſay that one ſingle text, if it could be found, which informs us that "Jeſus did not die for the ſins of all men," would have much more force with me, than a volume of inferences and dilemmas. It is eaſy to infer, and to propoſe dilemmas on any ſubject, and on any ſide of a queſtion, when the truth is entirely miſſed on *both* ſides. This is unqueſtionably evident, in a thouſand huge volumes, now extant. And it certainly ariſes from a diſregard to, or neglect of, plain, poſitive Scripture teſtimony. "In every ſacred truth," ſays the amiable Dr. Watts †, "that is revealed to us, a plain evidence that God hath ſaid it, ſhould be a ſufficient anſwer to a thouſand objections made againſt it."

I aſk leave to remark farther, that you have thought proper, at leaſt in part, to change the plan of operation; and inſtead of producing plain ſcriptural evidence in favour of the limited *extent* of our bleſſed Saviour's death, and abiding by that, which was the taſk you had undertook, you have ſet yourſelf to oppoſe the *univerſal* extent of it; a matter in which you had *now* no concern. The point in queſtion was not whether it be

* The late Dr. Clark, of St. Alban's.

† Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 254.

true

true that Chriſt died for all; but whether "the ſacred writers maintain that he did not." This you were engaged to prove; and it is contrary to the laws of diſputation to divert from it. I had not aſſerted that Chriſt died for all; and therefore your oppoſition to it, at preſent, is only beating the air. You cannot ſuppoſe, Sir, that if the Scriptures do not ſay Jeſus died only for a part of mankind, it is, therefore, neceſſarily inferred that he died for all;—or, if they do not ſay he died for all, it is, therefore, implied that he only died for a part. It might be that the Scriptures do not decide this controverſy; but have left it, as one of the "ſecret things that belong unto God." And our common friend, OBSERVATOR, ſeems to be of this opinion. For otherwiſe, how can there be a neceſſity for "endleſs debate" in order to decide it? Certainly there can be no ground of *endleſs debate* between two honeſt men, in determining a plain matter of fact, recorded in a plain book, deſigned to inſtruct plain people, in a plain way to heaven; which is the caſe now before us. Your not adverting to this, muſt be a glaring overſight. I avoided every thing that might look like a deſign to maintain that Jeſus died for all, to give you entire liberty to ſtate and defend your poſition to the beſt advantage. I hope you will treat me in the ſame fair manner, when I undertake to prove the contrary. I alſo hope you will excuſe me from taking much notice of your objections to the univerſality of our Saviour's death; eſpecially as the arguments you oppoſe are not mine; and you know, Sir, I am not obliged to defend any man's arguments beſides my own.

I now proceed to what you ſay in anſwer to mine. I moſt cordially agree with you, Sir, and I congratulate my poor fellow-ſinners upon it, that "Jeſus came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt;" to "ſave ſinners;" to "give his life a ranſom for many;" and "that he might bring us to God." But I am not able to prove from hence, that he only died for a part of mankind, becauſe I ſee nothing in this language that implies it. Moſt certainly, if a phyſician comes to a hoſpital, and invites all the diſordered there to be healed by him, and aſſures them of his ſufficiency and readineſs to heal them all, it is very juſt to ſay, "he came

to that hoſpital to heal the ſick;" and it is very right for thoſe who are healed by him, in conformity to the language of believers, who are healed by the ſtripes of Jeſus, to ſay, "he came that he might heal us."—I cannot accede to the inference you would draw from thoſe expreſſions, my dear Sir, for ſeveral reaſons,—becauſe I cannot ſee it implied in the language of theſe texts,—becauſe I never find it recorded in Scripture, that the cauſe why men are not ſaved, is that Jeſus did not die for them. Certain it is, that if there be any for whom Chriſt did not die, his not dying for them is the ſole cauſe why they are not ſaved; and yet I never hear it aſſigned as the cauſe in Scripture, and therefore I cannot believe it to be ſo. Conſequently, this is a confirming evidence that theſe Scriptures have no ſuch meaning,—becauſe I am elſewhere poſitively aſſured by the bleſſed God himſelf, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, that Jeſus did die for all;—becauſe I am aſſured by the ſame all-wiſe, infallible Spirit, that though Jeſus died for all, yet only they who "believe in him, ſhall have everlaſting life," John iii. 16. 18. 36.—becauſe I am informed by the ſame glorious ſource of wiſdom, that the cauſe why men are not ſaved is very different from what this doctrine ſuppoſes, namely, becauſe they believe not, John iii. 18.—2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11, 12. Theſe conſiderations may be enlarged, illuſtrated, and confirmed, God willing, in the ſequel of this debate. At preſent I only mention them *en paſſant*.

You roundly aſſert, but do not prove, that "reconciliation, juſtification, ſanctification, and eternal glory at laſt," are the neceſſary effects of our Saviour's death. When you produce your proof of this, we may conſider of it.—As to the *end* of God ſending his Son to die, it is expreſſed in John iii. 16, and other places, "that whoſoever believeth in him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting life." This end will moſt certainly be accompliſhed; and therefore "God and Chriſt cannot be *diſappointed*." So that your ſtrange inferences, page 9, concerning the "omniſcient Jehovah," and the "falſehood of Scripture," are very improper.—You chuſe to call the doctrine you oppoſe, a "fleſh-pleaſing doctrine;" but if it be the doctrine of Chriſt, it is no worſe for your aſperſions; and if it be not, I am willing to

give it up. It may, however, be ſafe to forbear hard names, "leſt haply we be found even to fight againſt God."

I am far from approving the expreſſions of Arminius, and am not, therefore, accountable for them. Yet I thank you, Sir, for you "*godly jealouſy*" over me, and your kind admonition, leſt I ſhould "go too far." Such hints are both neceſſary and friendly; and to avoid what you caution me againſt, I determine, thro' grace, to go as far as plain Scripture leads me, and no farther; and I adviſe you, my good Sir, to do the ſame.

You next preſent me with a few arguments of Dr. Owen, an author, whoſe memory I much venerate; but am ſatisfied, that if the Scriptures be true, he was miſtaken in other points as well as this: As his arguments are not founded on Scripture teſtimony, I ſhould be excuſable in paſſing them by, becauſe we are now enquiring concerning Scripture evidence reſpecting matter of fact; yet a word, as we go along, out of reverence to the Doctor, may be proper.

Arg. I. "If the Lord intended that the merits of Chriſt ſhould be univerſal." We are not ſpeaking of the "merits of Chriſt," even ſuppoſe we admit that unſcriptural ambiguous phraſe; we are ſimply enquiring whether Chriſt died for the ſins of all men, or not. The intention of God, we have mentioned above. "If the Lord intended this, that intention ought to be univerſally made known." But Dr. Owen's Maſter knows what ought to be done, better than he. It is too high for mortals to ſay what God *ought* to do. It is enough that we hear what he has done. We are informed that the goſpel has been made univerſally known, Rom. x. 18. Col. i. 6. 23. If the Lord pleaſe to deprive a nation or people of it, for their wickedneſs, as he ſometimes hath done, Amos viii. 11. Matt. xxi. 43. Rev. ii. 5. we are not to ſay to him, "What doſt thou?" But if he aſſure us that his ſon died for all men, the obedience of faith is due to that, as well as every other part of divine revelation.

Arg. II. "If Chriſt died intentionally for all men, he died for them either abſolutely, or conditionally," &c. Anſwer, Intentionally, abſolutely, conditionally, and many other *human* phraſes, which can have no uſe, but

but to confound the minds of the ſimple, I chuſe not to meddle with, leſt I "add to his words, and he reprove me, and I be found a liar." Prov. xxx. 6.

Arg. III. "All men are able to perform the condition of believing, or they are not," &c. Anſwer, We are commanded to believe in Jeſus, Acts xvi. 31. 1 John iii. 23. and condemned, and damned, if we do not, Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 18.—2 Theſſ. i. 8. ii. 10, 11. Heb. iii. 19. This is plain Scripture truth; he who ſpoke it, knows man's ability to believe, but has not ſo clearly taught either you, or me, or Dr. Owen, to talk about it. Therefore I leave him to decide this controverſy at the laſt day.

Your 11th, 12th, and 13th pages, contain ſome remarks (I leave it to the ill-natured reader to call them *random* remarks) on the terms *all*, *every*, &c. which terms I had not alledged in the debate; nor ſhould ever think of doing it, in the view in which you oppoſe them. I cannot, therefore, with any propriety, attend to what you ſay upon them. Theſe may afterwards come on in due courſe. I am pleaſed, my dear Sir, to find you accede to my account of the occaſion of our Saviour's words, John x. 11. But I greatly wonder how you can ſuppoſe that, in this view, he meant "fully to deſcribe the perſons for whom he gave his life," p. 14. I confeſs, I can neither ſee reaſon for, nor propriety in, ſuch a deſcription, conſidering the occaſion of the words. In my laſt to you, I deſired to know by what rule of interpretation you ſo explain this paſſage. An anſwer to this would have been a favour; 'till you are pleaſed to give it, I muſt believe there is none. You think if a limitation be not intended, the diſciples might have objected that "our Lord no more died for them than for others;" and, conſequently, it could not have attached their minds to him. I anſwer, if there be any conformity between the words, and the deſign, and occaſion of them, and if the occaſion and deſign be what you grant, our Lord could not here ſpeak of the diſtinction between them and others; but of the difference of his diſpoſition from that of the falſe ſhepherds or teachers before-mentioned. Nor could this leſs influence their minds towards him; becauſe neither ſcripture nor reaſon teach us *leſs* to value divine

favours,

favours, or *leſs* to love him who confers them, becauſe others partake of them as well as ourſelves: And therefore the reply you put into the mouths of the diſciples, p. 14, would, at once, have expreſſed their want of gratitude, and want of ſenſe.

The inference you aſcribe to me, Sir, p. 15. is not mine, but your own; and, therefore, the *ſophiſm* you juſtly fix upon it, muſt revert back to yourſelf, as your unalienable property. I ſcorn, I hate ſophiſtry, Sir. I ſcorn it, for it's meanneſs; I hate it, for it's baſeneſs. If "there be no limitation expreſſed," as you confeſs, in Acts xx. 28. Eph. v. 25. neither I nor you have authority to inſert one, leſt we "add to his words," who is infinitely wiſer than we, and requires us to be content with what he hath ſpoken, without adding to it, or taking from it. Prov. xxx. 6. Rev. xxii. 18. 19. But ſay you, "if perſons are deſcribed by name or character, to whom certain bleſſings or privileges do belong, doth not every perſon underſtand that they belong to them only, although no excluſive phraſe is expreſſed." I make free to anſwer, No, Sir; no intelligent perſon can underſtand a limitation where no excluſive phraſe is uſed, without a manifeſt perverſion of language, unleſs that limitation can be proved ſome other way; otherwiſe excluſive phraſes would be uſeleſs, and a great part of all languages muſt be thrown away at once. And I am well perſuaded that neither "the Scriptures," nor "daily obſervation," can furniſh us with *any* "examples of it." The two inſtances you adduce, do it not. I believe you will find it difficult to explain Pſalm cx. 3, in a manner that does not prove juſt the contrary to what you bring it for, and to vindicate that expoſition from the Scripture. If you make the attempt, Sir, I doubt not, you will find reaſon to believe that many both have been, are, and will be, made willing, in the day of divine power, beſides thoſe here called *thy people*. The 4th verſe undoubtedly relates to Chriſt only; but the evidence of this limitation is derived from other paſſages, and not from this text.

I think we may now fairly paſs on to your remarks on Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3, 4. The leading queſtion between us here is, "Whether Chriſt dying for men, and redeeming them, be ſynonimous terms, or inſeparable,

or

or of equal extent." You ſuppoſe they are. I ſuppoſe the contrary. You demand my proof, p. 17. I very willingly give it you, my good friend. It is this: Whenever the bleſſed God ſpeaks in his word determinately, of the number of thoſe for whom Chriſt died, he ſays, it was for *all*, for the *whole world*, for *every man*, &c. and never, that I know of, makes uſe of one word which neceſſarily implies the exception or excluſion of any. The ſame God of Truth expreſly tells us, that redemption, through the blood of Chriſt, is "the forgiveneſs of ſins." And never gives us, that I remember, any other definition of it. Now this forgiveneſs, or redemption, is expreſsly reſtricted or confined to thoſe who believe. And none are ever ſaid to be thus redeemed, in the Scriptures, beſides believers; and it is expreſsly declared, that thoſe who believe not are condemned, and ſhall be damned. The paſſages are numerous; and I need not refer *you* to them.

I have already ſpoke my ſentiments of the notion aſcribed to Arminius; and, therefore, may here fairly paſs over what you ſay relative to that, p. 17, 18. together with what you call "the common objections of the Univerſaliſts," as theſe are not *my* objections. Only you ſeem to lay great ſtreſs on one point, which I wonder at, *viz.* that "Chriſt is the interceſſor, or advocate," (which, by the bye, are different terms and offices,) "for all thoſe for whom he died." And you demand of me, "Why do you not maintain that he is really an advocate for all men, as well as a propitiation for their ſins?" I anſwer, my dear Sir, becauſe I find no ſuch thing in Scripture. Nay, it is expreſsly contrary to Scripture. "He is the propitiation for the ſins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2. But he himſelf ſays, "I *pray not* for the world," John xvii. 9. "He gave himſelf a ranſom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. "He maketh interceſſion for them that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25. and 1 John ii. 1, 2. which, by a ſurprizing inadvertency, you quote in proof of the contrary. "In 1 John ii. 1." ſay you, "we find that thoſe for whom he is declared to be an advocate, or interceſſor, are expreſſed in general terms, as well as thoſe for whom he is ſaid, in verſe 2, to be a propitiation." Why, my good friend, if language be capable

of

of conveying ideas, you muſt have made a miſtake. Only read the text.—"*We* have an advocate with the Father—He is the propitiation for *our* ſins—And not for *ours* only, but alſo for the ſins of the *whole world*." Is it ſaid he is the advocate for the *whole world?* If not, how could you ſay "there is as good ground for the one as the other?" You ſee, there is expreſs Scripture *for* the one, but no Scripture *for* the other.

When you have ſaid a good deal about *conditions* (a word with which I have no concern, becauſe my Bible has none,) you propoſe a dilemma to me, p. 21, "by which," you ſay, "it will be ſeen whether Chriſt laid down his life for the ſins of all men or not." No, my good Sir, that muſt be learnt from the divine teſtimony, and your dilemma has not a word of that teſtimony in it, reſpecting the extent or limits of our Saviour's death. Dilemmas of this kind can eaſily be propoſed on either ſide of the ſubject in great plenty; but I cannot believe they will, at all, contribute to clear up, but to perplex the truth. We are called upon to believe the Word of God, Sir, and not to try who can be moſt cunning in propoſing dilemmas, as if we were left in the darkneſs of heatheniſm; or, as if we had part of the divine will revealed to us, and were called to ſpin the reſt out of our own brains. I frankly declare to you and the world, Sir, that though propoſing dilemmas is very eaſy, and I ſenſibly feel how it gratifies one's native pride, yet I dare not engage with this kind of weapons, leſt I "provoke the Holy One of Iſrael to anger." I cannot help regarding it as a piece of profane wanton pride, Sir, to anſwer the queries and cavils of men, which are not founded upon that teſtimony, by which I am to believe and act here, and to be judged at the laſt day. Yet a few words, as we go along, reſpecting ſome of the *expreſſions* which compoſe your dilemma, may not be quite improper. "He either died," you ſay, "for the whole of their ſins, or part of them." But this is quite another queſtion, Sir. We are not now enquiring whether he died for *all ſins*, but for the ſins *all men*. You ſpeak of "Chriſt reconciling God to men." A phraſe which the Scripture knows nothing of; but is perfectly abhorrent both to the phraſe, and the idea it conveys.—You tell me, "the people whoſe ſins he

bears

bears, the Apoſtle, in Heb. ix. 28. calls many." But I hope you do not ſuppoſe that *many* is a word which expreſſes limitation; becauſe that would be a proper word, you know, if Jeſus died for all, and is uſed concerning the effects of Adam's ſin, Rom. v. 15. 19. where I hope and believe yourſelf would not admit a limitation. You add, "and them that look for him," &c. But the Apoſtle doth not ſay he died for them that look for him, Sir; but has evidently marked the diſtinction between the many for whom he died, and, "them that look for him," by placing the latter under a quite different predicament.

You chuſe, p. 22, to controvert my idea of redemption, as "ſignifying deliverance in general." I recommended many paſſages to your conſideration in proof of it, chiefly from the Old Teſtament, where, having no reſpect to the death of Chriſt, they might be read with impartiality, and therefore moſt likely to determine the ſcriptural ſenſe of the word; it being univerſally granted that the ſignification of a word, the ſenſe of which is diſputed, is generally beſt learnt by this method. And yet, for this very reaſon, you diſlike my references, becauſe they are Old Teſtament ones. Will you then, Sir, pleaſe to read the following paſſages of the *New* Teſtament?—Luke i. 68. ii. 38. xxi. 28. xxiv. 21. Rom. iii. 24. viii. 23. 1 Cor. i. 30. Gal. iii. 13. iv. 4. Eph. i. 7. 14. iv. 30. v. 16. Col. i. 14. iv. 5. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12. 15. 1 Pet. i. 18.—I cannot but hope, Sir, that when you have read theſe paſſages, you will no longer be "far from thinking that my definition is juſt."

The Apoſtle defines Redemption, in one ſpecial application of it, in Epheſ. i. 7. Col. i. 14. and calls it "forgiveneſs of ſins." To this you tell me, p. 23, "you have no objection." But ſtill you will have it to be "only in a ſecondary view." Can you then point us to another definition of Redemption by the blood of Chriſt, which is to be underſtood in a *primary view?* I cordially agree with you, Sir, that this is "in conſequence of our being bought or purchaſed with the blood of Jeſus." But this can be no proof that buying or purchaſing is "Redemption, in the proper and ſtrict meaning of the word." Rather, as the Apoſtle himſelf informs

informs us, Jeſus hereby "obtained redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12. This cannot be, therefore, redemption itſelf. Propriety of ſpeech will not admit of it. Can it be proper to ſay, he redeemed us by redeeming us? By redemption, he obtained redemption for us? If not, you muſt give up the point, and fall in with the Apoſtle's definition.

I freely grant you, Sir, that the native ſignification of the Greek word ἀγοράζω, uſed in Rev. v. 9. and xiv. 3, 4. is to *buy*; but becauſe our tranſlators have rendered that word *redeem*, that is no proof that buy or redeem are ſynonimous; and, in my opinion, the current language of Scripture makes againſt it. And the word ἀπολύτρωσις, you know, ſignifies the *price of redemption* *. Yet no conſiderate man will deny that this word will admit of being *tranſlated* deliverance in ſome places, and is *neceſſarily* underſtood ſo in others. I refer you to the following, where this Greek word is found: Luke ii. 38. xxi. 28. Rom. iii. 24. viii. 23. 1 Cor. i. 30. Epheſ. i. 7. 14. iv. 30. Col. i. 14. Heb. ix. 12, 13. And it is ſo tranſlated in Heb. xi. 35. I do not make theſe obſervations to defend our tranſlators, or to deny your ſenſe of the word ἀγοράζω, but to ſhew how precarious any argument muſt be that is formed on the native ſignification of one Greek word, eſpecially when this argument oppoſes the current language of Scripture. I confeſs this current language of Scripture was what I chiefly regarded, in my remarks on yours; yet I have the pleaſure to find ſince, that ſome conſiderable critics and expoſitors ſo explain even theſe very places in the Revelation, as to confirm the ſenſe I have given of the word *redeem*. Durham, Gomarus, and Cluverus (apud Polum), and the pious and practical Burkitt in particular. I beg leave to obſerve alſo, that your expoſition of theſe paſſages in queſtion, would make this the language of *all the ſaved*; and you expreſsly tell us, p. 23, that "Chriſt died for none but them." But by comparing chap. vii. 9. you will find that the ſaved are ſpoken of as a great multitude, which no man could number, added to this hundred and forty-four thouſand

* Significat proprie redemptionis pretium, Aret. apud Leigh, in verbum.

here mentioned, and the four beaſts, and twenty-four elders, mentioned chap. v. So that thoſe who ſung the ſong here in queſtion, were but a very ſmall part of thoſe who are glorified; and, whatever be the preciſe meaning of the words, they are applicable even to an innumerable multitude, beſides thoſe who here make uſe of them. And beſides, you know, Sir, the ſame Greek work is found in 2 Pet. ii. 1. and thoſe are ſaid to be *bought*, who deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction.

Now, Sir, after all, I grant freely, that if you give up the point with reſpect to *redeem*, and change the reading here to *buy*, you will have, at firſt ſight, a plauſible inference in favour of your ſentiment; and I think, incomparably the moſt plauſible of any derived from the Word of God. Yet it is no more than an inference ſtill; and all inferences are ſo precarious, that I ſhould be very unwilling to found a doctrine of faith upon them. And if you conſider all that is ſaid above, and add, that the book where theſe words are found, is confeſſedly very myſterious,—that theſe words were ſpoken on a very peculiar occaſion,—and that, in order to come at your inference, you are obliged to change the tranſlation; you will certainly obſerve, that your inference almoſt dwindles into nothing. I need not propoſe the dilemmas or difficulties in form, Sir, your good ſenſe will point them out, and your candor will give them their due weight.

Laſtly, You handſomely remark on my firſt Query, and with all your good nature, and opinion of my good ſenſe, you can hardly acquit me of calculating it to "enſnare ſome unthinking perſon or other to acknow-"ledge ſome human writer as the author of the doc-"trine of Chriſt not laying down his life for the ſins of "all mankind." I never wiſhed to enſnare, Sir; and therefore I twice declared both to you and the public, that I could not find the doctrine in my Bible. And I now declare it a third time. I am perſuaded a human writer was the author of it, and not a very ancient one neither. But the laws of diſputation oblige no man to prove a negative. The Bible is open; the writings of all ages are open. If any of the ſacred writers, or any ancient eccleſiaſtical writer, have aſſerted it, let any man

man ſhew the *place* where it is aſſerted, and I give up the point. I did not aſſert that "Chriſt died for all men," Sir, and therefore could not expect, as you would inſinuate, that any body "would take it for granted upon my own mere aſſertion." I avo ded this, that the ground might be clear for you to have every advantage you could wiſh. I deſire no fairer treatment from you, and I hope for the ſame, when, in anſwer to your demand, or challenge, if you pleaſe, I attempt, through divine aſſiſtance, to demonſtrate the truth of this glorious doctrine. I intend my next to be an introduction to this proof. May the Spirit of Truth be your and my director in this important undertaking! I am, my dear SIR,

Your's, with cordial eſteem and affection,

SCRUTATOR.

LETTER II.

To Mr. RESPONSOR.

Dear SIR,

I Know the power of prejudice, and the ſtrength of party fetters, by painful experience. The only requeſt I here make is, that you would diveſt yourſelf of theſe as much as poſſible. And let us both endeavour to follow the Divine direction, "to the law and to the teſtimony." I cannot but indulge the pleaſing hope that, by this method, we ſhall, in due time, be more of the ſame mind than we appear to be at preſent; eſpecially reſpecting that moſt awfully glorious ſubject, the extent of our bleſſed Saviour's death. I now ſit down, in the name, the ſtrength, and the fear of God, to lay before you a little of that Scripture evidence, by which I am fully perſuaded that "Jeſus Chriſt laid down his life for the ſins of all mankind." I own this doctrine appears to me like a golden thread interwoven throughout a great part of the Scripture; and therefore, I find myſelf rather at a loſs where to begin my proof. I will,

 however,

however, venture to begin with that well-known paſſage, 1 John ii. 2. "He is the propitiation for our ſins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world." The matter in debate, you know, Sir, depends entirely, or chiefly, on the ſignification of two or three words in this text,—*ours*, and the *whole world*.

There are two very different expoſitions given of theſe few words. It appears to me proper and fair to ſtate them here, as we ſhall hereby, I think, be able to proſecute and diſcuſs the ſubject in debate, with more advantage to ourſelves and our readers. One is, I think, truly and properly expreſſed in this manner: "He is "the propitiation for our ſins, who are Jewiſh believers, "or, who are of Jewiſh extract, and have already be-"lieved; and not for ours only, but alſo, for the ſins "of all others who do, or ſhall hereafter, believe in him, "even Gentiles, as well as Jews: or, in a word, for "the whole world of the elect." The other is, "He "is the propitiation for our ſins, who now believe, "whether Jews or Gentiles; and not for ours only, "but alſo for the ſins of all mankind beſides." I ſtate it thus, in order that every thing may be clear and eaſy, and that we may not miſrepreſent each other. You know the former of theſe is the common expoſition on that ſide which I, at preſent, venture to oppoſe. If your ſenſe of the text be any way peculiar; and different from it, I here promiſe, that, when you honour me with another epiſtle, and give me your's, I will lay this aſide, and take up your's inſtead of it.

I adopt the other expoſition, that is, "He is the propitiation for our ſins, who now believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of all mankind beſides." The reaſons I give *for* this interpretation of the text, and *againſt* the other, are ſuch as follow:

1. The epiſtle is a *general* one. This is allowed on both ſides. "The perſons," ſays Dr. Guyſe, "to "whom this epiſtle was wrote, were not any particular "church, but all Chriſtians in general, of that age, "perhaps principally Jews, but inclufive of Gentiles, "with a view to all ſucceeding generations; on which "account it is called a general epiſtle." Preface to this epiſtle.—It muſt, therefore, be granted, that he is here addreſſing

addreſſing believers in general, both Jews and Gentiles. For to whom ſoever the epiſtle is addreſſed, it is evident he includes them all, in the extenſive words *any man*, ver. 1. "If any man ſin," &c.

2. When he ſays *we* have an advocate, and he is the propitiation for *our* ſins, ver. 1, 2. It is moſt manifeſt that in theſe words *we* and *our*, he means to include all thoſe he intends by the extenſive words *any man*. Otherwiſe he would not only deviate from his uſual manner of addreſs, and from the uſual manner of all the Apoſtles; but his expreſſions would not anſwer his deſign, which is to encourage and comfort their minds under a ſenſe of ſin, by reminding them of their intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, as an *advocate* and a *propitiation*. For they could not be comforted by this, unleſs *every one* of them, under a ſenſe of ſin, could plead their intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt. Conſequently the pronouns, *we* and *our*, muſt include all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles; for to ſay, if *any man* ſin, we *Jews* have an advocate with the Father, can never be reconciled to propriety of expreſſion,—and inſtead of anſwering, it would counteract his great deſign, by diſpiriting, rather than comforting the dejected Gentiles; not to mention the abſurdity of ſuppoſing this diſtinction and limitation, when it is undeniable that the Apoſtle has not given us the leaſt intimation of it.

3. If the words *we* and *our* in 1 John ii. 1, 2. be not extended to all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, there is no proof from Scripture, that believing Gentiles are intereſted in our Saviour's advocateſhip; and yet believing Gentiles are, and have been, taught to conſider themſelves thus intereſted in all ages ſince. Now this is quite without foundation, unleſs it can be proved from this paſſage; for his advocateſhip is not ſpoken of elſewhere in all the Bible. We are told, indeed, Heb. vii. 25. that "he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them." But this is no proof that he is their advocate. For, though you ſpeak of theſe offices, p. 19. as if they were the ſame, yet, upon conſideration, you will undoubtedly find that both word and office are very different. If, therefore, we reſtrain the terms *we* and *our*, to believing Jews, we, at one ſtroke, deſtroy all the comfort which we ourſelves, and almoſt all believers now in the world, can take from the ad-

vocateſhip of our bleſſed Redeemer. But I believe you, Sir, cannot bear the thought of this; and, therefore, you muſt extend the words *we* and *our* to all believing Jews and Gentiles, in the apoſtolic, and in all ſucceeding ages.

4. The language and doctrine of the epiſtle in general, is moſt clearly addreſſed to the believing Gentiles, as well as the Jews. It evidently ſuits the one as well as the other; and both have conſidered it as ſuitable to their circumſtances, and have applied it to themſelves, and been ſo *taught* to apply it, by miniſters of all parties and opinions, in all ages, ſince the time when it was written. And it would be an irreparable loſs to the churches if it were not ſo applied; it is ſo applied in the preſent age; and the verſes in queſtion are ſo applied, as well as the reſt, without any reſtraint whatſoever; and there is not an expreſſion in theſe verſes, nor in the whole epiſtle, that forbids ſuch an extenſive application. Nor can there be any other juſt reaſon aſſigned for confining the pronouns, *us*, *we*, and *our*, to the Jews, either in this verſe, or any other of the epiſtle.—The words are true of the believing Gentiles, as well as the Jews. They both have "an *advocate* with the Father." This reſtrained ſenſe of the pronouns would no better anſwer the Apoſtle's deſign, which was to comfort the afflicted conſcience under a ſenſe of ſin. The conſideration of having "an advocate with the Father," would be equally chearing to the afflicted conſcience of a Gentile, as to that of a Jew. The words expreſs the only remedy for either; and a ſufficient remedy for both. It is therefore amazingly ſtrange to me, that any ſincere man, in the uſe of his reaſon, and under the influence of Divine Grace, ſhould attempt to reſtrain the former verſe now before us to the believing Jews; and if not, the latter verſe cannot be reſtrained. I earneſtly wiſh, Sir, that you would deliberate on theſe things with the feelings and the candor of a man,—of a chriſtian,—of yourſelf.

5. A ſenſe of ſin contracted, is the moſt diſtreſſing, afflicting, and pitiable condition, that mortals are attended with on earth. This ſenſation demands our commiſeration above all others. And I ſuppoſe you will grant, Sir, that this Apoſtle does not confine theſe pronouns, *we* and *our*, to the Jewiſh believers, in any other

other part of this epiſtle. Now I aſk, Would it not have been (admit the expreſſion) a cruel impropriety to have made ſuch a diſtinction between Jews and Gentiles, in this moſt tender of all concerns, when the one, as well as the other, needed the moſt tender compaſſion, and the moſt healing cordial?

6. It is undeniable, that the Apoſtle applies theſe pronouns, *us*, *we*, and *our*, to both Jews and Gentiles, throughout the whole epiſtle; and we all ſo underſtand, and apply, and improve his language among all parties. Now it is never fair, nor conſiſtent with any good rules of interpretation, to apply the words of an author in a ſenſe different from that in which he conſtantly uſes the ſame words throughout the ſame work, unleſs he himſelf informs us that he uſes the words differently in that place. Without adverting to this, we may render any author unintelligible. And we have no information of any ſuch different uſe of the words in queſtion, in the place before us; and, therefore, I can ſcarce think it leſs than an inſult upon the Sacred Writer, to ſuppoſe that he here means to confine theſe pronouns to the believing Jews.

From theſe conſiderations, Sir, I confeſs it appears to me one of the plaineſt things imaginable, that when the Apoſtle John ſays, "*We* have an advocate with the Father; and he is the propitiation for *our* ſins," he includes all believers, both Jews and Gentiles; and I muſt believe that theſe words would never have been otherwiſe applied or underſtood, had it not been to ſerve a party ſcheme, which is generally the cauſe of Scripture being perverted.

If the meaning of the former part of the verſe be ſettled, I believe we ſhall be at no great loſs to underſtand the latter. If the former include believers in general, believers of all ages and nations, as it is evident from the foregoing remarks it muſt do, it will be very natural to underſtand the *latter part* as extending to "all mankind beſides;" even ſuppoſe nothing more could be ſaid in favour of this interpretation. But that much more may be ſaid in favour of it, will appear by obſerving,

7. That it is a neceſſary rule of interpretation, and therefore univerſally approved, to take an expreſſion in the common obvious ſenſe, unleſs ſomething in the context, in the nature of things, or in ſome other part of Scripture,

Scripture, forbid it. Now, I appeal to all mankind, whether every honeſt, plain, unprejudiced reader, unacquainted with controverſial niceties and party refinements, would not moſt naturally underſtand the words *whole world*, as denoting "all mankind," except thoſe diſtinguiſhed by the word *our* in the foregoing part of the verſe. And if ſo, then this is the natural ſenſe of the words, according to the common uſe of language, and the common ſenſe of mankind. And there is nothing in the context, nor in all the epiſtle, that forbids us thus to underſtand it. But this ſenſe is favoured and confirmed by the diſtinction in the very text itſelf, and by the uſe of the pronouns, *us* and *our*, throughout the whole epiſtle, as we have ſeen above. There is nothing in the nature of the thing, ſo far as we can ſee, that forbids it. All mankind are partakers of the ſame human nature which Jeſus took upon himſelf. All mankind are involved in guilt, by breach of the ſame law. The blood of Chriſt is confeſſedly of ſufficient virtue and efficacy to make atonement for all men; and God could, if he pleaſed, have given his Son to die for all men, as will be allowed on all hands; and his goodneſs is not ſo contracted as to forbid it, for "God is love," chap. iv. 16. "He is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works," Pſ. cxlv. 9. Nor is there a ſingle clauſe in the whole Bible contradicted by this extenſive ſenſe of the words; for a text cannot be produced in which we are informed that Chriſt did not die for all men; or in which a limitation of his death is plainly expreſſed.

8. There is not another paſſage in the whole Bible in which it can reaſonably be pretended the words *whole world* ſignify "the elect, or all who do and ſhall believe." Therefore this ſenſe of the words is entirely arbitrary, and not favoured by any other paſſage, where the ſame words are uſed. I think the phraſe *whole world*, or *all the world*, is not found in any place in the Bible, except in this text, and the following places: Job xxxiv. 13. Matt. xvi. 26. xxiv. 14. Mark xiv. 9. xvi. 15. Luke ii. 1. Acts xi. 28. Rom. i. 8. iii. 19. Col. i. 6. 1 John v. 19. Rev. iii. 10. xii. 9. xiii. 3. xvi. 14. You will eaſily obſerve, Sir, that ſeveral of theſe paſſages intend the material world, or the globe on which we live, with the poſſeſſions and enjoyments of it, rather than

than the inhabitants of it. In ſeveral others, a part of the habitable globe is intended; and that intention is both evident by the context, and by the different Greek word which the ſacred writer makes uſe of, οικουμενη, not κοσμος, the word uſed in the text before us. Such are Matt. xxiv, 14. Luke ii. 1. Acts xi. 28. Rev. iii. 10. xvi. 14. In one of them, we have γη, the earth, as Rev. xiii. 3. And you are ſenſible the reſt (except chap. v. 19. of which below,) are little or nothing to the purpoſe before us. So that to underſtand the *whole world* of ſuch as do, or ſhall believe, is without any authority or countenance from the ſcriptural uſe of the word elſewhere.

It is univerſally conſidered, as a good and ſafe rule of interpretation, to conſult, on any difficult or diſputed expreſſion, the ſame author in whom that expreſſion is found in the other places, where he uſes the ſame, or ſimilar phraſes, on the ſame or ſimilar conſtructions, and makes the ſame or the like diſtinctions, as in that place where the controverted expreſſion is found. If an author be a good one, this rule is infallible; and if the ſimilar paſſages be pretty numerous, it cannot fail of being ſucceſsful. Now we are happy here, Sir, in both theſe reſpects. The author writes by divine inſpiration, in a ſtyle confeſſedly plain and ſimple. Similar phraſes and diſtinctions with that in the text before us are not a few, even in this ſame divine, plain, ſimple author; and the ſame phraſe and the ſame diſtinction in one place, where the meaning can admit of no fair diſpute. Notwithſtanding the ſmall compaſs of my reading, I am ſtrongly inclined to believe that there is not an author extant in whom a paſſage can be found, attended with the like circumſtances, the meaning of which admits of any difficulty. Nay, I am much perſuaded there is not a ſingle paſſage in any approved author, ſacred or profane, ancient or modern, of which an approved interpretation is given from like circumſtances, but that interpretation will confirm the explication I here defend of the paſſage before us. The places where this divine writer uſes the expreſſions *us* and *the world*, *you* and *the world*, *we* and *the world*, &c. are ſo numerous, that it would be tedious to quote them; and to one acquainted with the Scriptures, it is unneceſſary.

But

But now, Sir, is there a ſingle inſtance of ſuch diſtinction, in all this Apoſtle's writings, where the words *us*, *ours*, or *you*, &c. mean the believing Jews, and the *world*, the elect, or believing Gentiles, or believing Jews and Gentiles? Nay, is there an inſtance of this diſtinction where it is not readily allowed on all hands, and extremely evident, that the divine writer muſt be underſtood in the ſenſe I here defend? What then can excuſe us, my dear Sir, in wrenching ſo glorious a paſſage from its native obvious meaning, to force one upon it, not authorized, yourſelf being judge, by one ſingle paſſage of the like conſtruction in the whole Bible; and quite inconſiſtent with the phraſeology of the ſame holy writer, in almoſt innumerable paſſages? I add, once more, in this ſame plain ſhort epiſtle, we have the *very ſame* phraſe, and the *ſame* diſtinction; and I believe you yourſelf will grant it has the very ſame ſignification which I here contend for. It is chap. v. 19. I ſcarcely think remarks upon it neceſſary. You know it cannot fairly be denied that *we* in this paſſage, intends thoſe that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; and is applicable to all believers, in all ages; and that the whole world intends all mankind beſides, who are in a ſtate of carnality, and ſpiritual death. Now, my good friend, how ridiculous it muſt be to ſuppoſe, that a ſacred author, in one ſhort letter, peculiarly plain and ſimple, ſhould uſe the ſame phraſes twice, in a ſenſe as different from each other, as light is different from darkneſs, without giving the ſlighteſt reaſon for ſo doing, or the ſlighteſt intimation that he deſigns ſuch a difference! I am perſuaded, if any human writer had expreſſed himſelf in the manner this Apoſtle muſt be ſuppoſed to do, when all the above circumſtances are conſidered, by thoſe I now venture to oppoſe, he would have been hiſſed out of ſociety with univerſal contempt.

It appears to me, Sir, that the glorious truth I here wiſh to defend, has the ſame clear and full evidence, from a great number of other paſſages, which, in my humble opinion, are whipped into froth, or trampled in the mire, when explained and applied in any other point of view. Theſe, however, will probably be reſerved till you honour me with another favour. I fore-

ſee

ſee what is likely to be the conſequence of this freedom. But whatever be the conſequence, he muſt be obeyed who ſays, "Buy the truth, and ſell it not." It is a pearl of infinite value; and the leaſt quantity of it deſerves to be purchaſed, if poſſible, with all the wealth in the univerſe. That you and I may value it as we ought, and live and die in the firm belief, and happy poſſeſſion of it; and, at laſt, meet in that bleſſed world where perfect and unmixed truth ſhall fill our minds, and ſurround us for ever, is the ardent wiſh, and pleaſing hope, of, dear SIR,

Your's, with cordial affection,

July 16, 1781. SCRUTATOR.

To Mr. CONSIDERATOR.

SIR,

WHEN I had nearly prepared my letters to RESPONSOR for the preſs, your's was brought to my hand; and I do aſſure you, it gave me no little concern to find that one of my fellow-creatures ſhould have ſo little regard to his reputation, his time, his conſcience, and his Bible, as to be capable of taking ſo much pains to make himſelf perfectly contemptible. I would not willingly expoſe you more than may be for your real advantage, and ſhall therefore avoid making any remarks on your pamphlet. Inſtead of this, I beg your acceptance of the following advice, *viz.* As you are evidently unqualified for polemic writing, I adviſe you to lay aſide the thoughts of it, and to deſire your friends no more to abuſe you and your cauſe by putting you upon it. Inſtead of it, employ your time in reading the plain, practical parts of Scripture with ſimplicity, and prayer for divine illumination; and reduce what you read to thoſe practical purpoſes which it is deſigned and calculated to ſubſerve. Should you never be able to defend the truth by the arts of controverſy, as it is probable you never will, you may hereby be prepared, under the bleſſing of God, to honour it by a holy converſation.

verſation. This is more noble, and will prove much more profitable. That you may, by theſe methods, be brought to a better temper, and a better judgment, and that you may at laſt, through the blood of the Lamb, be brought to the regions of everlaſting truth and felicity, is the prayer of

Your ſincere Well-wiſher,

SCRUTATOR.

FINIS.